

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 24, 2004

The Honorable Donald Rumsfeld
Secretary
Department of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

The Honorable Gordon England
Secretary of the Navy
1000 Navy Pentagon
Washington, DC 20350-1000


Secretary Rumsfeld and Secretary England:

We appreciate the importance of a robust selection process for the VXX program, and support the Navy in its goal to procure the most technologically advanced, safe and secure aircraft to meet the President's needs. The recent decision to delay award of the VXX contract concerns us however, because of the negative consequences for the men and women who work for Sikorsky. In the wake of the Comanche helicopter's cancellation, and following this decision on Marine One, Sikorsky has terminated 100 employees and been forced to reassign several hundred more.

Sikorsky has indicated that, should it win the Marine One contract, many of these jobs may be reprogrammed to work on the Presidential helicopter fleet. We share the concern of the entire Connecticut delegation that a lengthy delay in the awarding this contract will make job-preservation strategy much more difficult. We ask that as the Navy proceeds in the selection process, it take into account the impact that delaying the decision process has on the hardworking men and women of Sikorsky.

We are confident in Sikorsky Aircraft's unique ability to build an All-American helicopter deserving of the honor to fly our Commander-in-Chief.

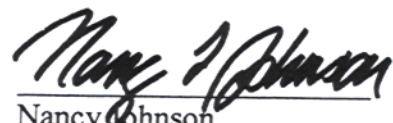
Sincerely,



Christopher Shays
Member of Congress



Rob Simmons
Member of Congress



Nancy Johnson
Member of Congress